

What is claimed is:

1. A method comprising:
initializing a processor in a pre-boot environment using a first computer readable medium;
determining if the processor requires legacy support; and
selectively locating and loading a compatibility support module into the processor from a second computer readable medium if the processor requires legacy support.
2. A method as defined in claim 1, wherein selectively locating and loading a compatibility support module comprises locating the compatibility support module on at least one of a host protected area and a system partition of the second computer readable medium when the processor requires legacy support.
3. A method as defined in claim 1, wherein the second computer readable medium comprises a hard drive.
4. A method as defined in claim 1, wherein determining if the processor requires legacy support comprises locating and examining a device path of an operating system.
5. A method as defined in claim 1, further comprising executing the compatibility support module.

6. A method as defined in claim 5, wherein executing the compatibility support module comprises initializing at least one of a BIOS data area and legacy interrupt vectors.

7. A method as defined in claim 5, wherein executing the compatibility support module comprises executing instructions that support at least one of a legacy computer application and a legacy computer operating system.

8. A method as defined in claim 1, wherein selectively locating and loading the compatibility support module comprises searching for at least one of an identifier and a signature associated with the compatibility support module in a plurality of computer readable medium locations.

9. An apparatus comprising:
a processor system including a pre-boot image memory and an alternate memory;
instructions stored on the pre-boot image memory; and
a compatibility support module stored on the alternate memory,
wherein the instructions stored on the pre-boot image memory enable the processor system in a pre-boot environment to determine a legacy support requirement and to selectively load the compatibility support module based on the legacy support requirement.

10. An apparatus as defined in claim 9, wherein the compatibility support module is stored on at least one of a host protected area and a system partition of the alternate memory.
11. An apparatus as defined in claim 9, wherein the alternate memory is a hard drive.
12. An apparatus as defined in claim 9, wherein the instructions stored on the pre-boot image memory enable the processor system to execute the compatibility support module.
13. An apparatus as defined in claim 9, wherein the compatibility support module is configured to initialize at least one of a BIOS data area and legacy interrupt vectors.
14. An apparatus as defined in claim 9, wherein the compatibility support module enables the processor system to support at least one of a legacy processor system application and a legacy processor system operating system.
15. An apparatus as defined in claim 9, wherein the legacy support requirement is determined based on a device path of an operating system.

16. A first computer readable medium having instructions stored thereon that, when executed, cause a machine to:
- initialize a processor in a pre-boot environment;
 - determine if the processor system requires a legacy support; and
 - selectively locate and load a compatibility support module stored on a second computer readable medium if the processor system requires the legacy support.
17. A first computer readable medium as defined in claim 16 having instructions stored thereon that, when executed, cause the machine to locate the compatibility support module on at least one of a host protected area and a system partition of the second computer readable medium.
18. A first computer readable medium as defined in claim 16 having instructions stored thereon that, when executed, cause the machine to execute the compatibility support module.
19. A first computer readable medium as defined in claim 16 having instructions stored thereon that, when executed, cause the machine to establish at least one of a BIOS data area and legacy interrupt vectors.
20. A first computer readable medium as defined in claim 16 having instructions stored thereon that, when executed, cause the machine to support at least one of a legacy computer application and a legacy computer operating system.

21. A first computer readable medium as defined in claim 16 having instructions stored thereon that, when executed, cause the machine to search for at least one of an identifier and a signature associated with the compatibility support module in a plurality of computer readable medium locations.

22. A first computer readable medium having instructions stored thereon that, when executed, cause a first machine to:

store a compatibility support module on a second computer readable medium;

store a pre-boot image on a pre-boot image computer readable medium;

configure the pre-boot image to determine a legacy support requirement of a second machine; and

configure the pre-boot image to enable the second machine to load the compatibility support module based on the legacy support requirement.

23. A first computer readable medium as defined in claim 22 having instructions stored thereon that, when executed, cause the first machine to configure the pre-boot image to enable the second machine to execute the conditional load sequence.

24. A first computer readable medium as defined in claim 22 having instructions stored thereon that, when executed, cause the first machine to store the compatibility support module on at least one of a host protected area and a system partition of the second computer readable medium.

25. A first computer readable medium as defined in claim 22 comprising instructions stored thereon that, when executed, cause the first machine to configure the pre-boot image to enable the second machine to execute the compatibility support module.

26. A first computer readable medium as defined in claim 22 having instructions stored thereon that, when executed, cause the first machine to configure the compatibility support module to establish at least one of a BIOS data area and legacy interrupt vectors.

27. A first computer readable medium as defined in claim 22 having instructions stored thereon that, when executed, cause the first machine to configure the compatibility support module to support at least one of a legacy computer application and a legacy computer operating system.

28. An apparatus comprising:
a processor system including a flash memory and an alternate memory;
instructions stored on the flash memory; and
a compatibility support module stored on the alternate memory,
wherein the instructions stored on the flash memory enable the processor system in a pre-boot environment to determine a legacy support requirement and to selectively load the compatibility support module based on the legacy support requirement.

29. An apparatus as defined in claim 28, wherein the instructions stored on the flash memory enable the processor system to execute the compatibility support module.